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THE ROLE OF THE STATE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUPERVISOR.

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THE MODERN STATE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUPERVISOR IS PRIMARILY A LEADER IN A COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISE INVOLVING ALL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION, AND IS JUDGED BY THE SERVICE GIVEN TO THE TOTAL SYSTEM. THE SUPERVISOR SHOULD HAVE A SOLID BACKGROUND IN LANGUAGES, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL, AND TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND TECHNIQUES, AND SHOULD UNDERSTAND AND BE ABLE TO ASSIST TEACHERS. THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE IS BASICALLY TO (1) ASSIST LOCAL TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WITH THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES, (2) COORDINATE THE STATEWIDE INSTRUCTIONAL EFFORT INTO A WELL-BALANCED, DYNAMIC PROGRAM, AND (3) SERVE IN A LIAISON CAPACITY WITH RELATED EDUCATIONAL DIVISIONS, VARIOUS STATE ORGANIZATIONS, AND NATIONAL AGENCIES. THIS SPEECH WAS PRESENTED AT THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE TEACHING (1ST, ATLANTA, FEBRUARY 4-6, 1965). (AS)

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THE ROLE OF STATE FOREIGN LANGUAGE SUPERVISOR [1]

by
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I. What is supervision?

The role of supervision has changed from the traditional concept of inspection and imposition to that of a cooperative enterprise in which all concerned work together toward the improvement of education. Today the major task of supervision is to stimulate and to create the proper environment necessary to help teachers grow and, through teachers, to improve the instructional program. The primary function of supervision is leadership; specifically to encourage, to stimulate, and to assist. Modern supervision involves a study of the entire teaching-learning process. Effective supervision does not exist in isolation; it involves all aspects of education.

II. What are the qualifications of a good supervisor?

A good supervisor must have an excellent background in his own field plus be skillful in leadership, in managing human relations, and in guiding group process. He attempts to bring out the best in those with whom he is working.

A good foreign language supervisor should:

A. Have been a successful elementary or secondary-school teacher of at least one modern foreign language (although being an excellent

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This paper is distributed in the hope that it will provide a general overview concerning the job of the state foreign language supervisor. It may also serve as one basis for preparing a "blueprint" on foreign language supervision at the state level.

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classroom teacher does not automatically insure good supervision).

B. Be "Competent" in more than one foreign language.

C. Be knowledgeable in psychology of learning, applied linguistics, and in the value and use of technological data.

D. Possess a broad knowledge of teaching procedures, instructional material, and equipment.

E. Be able to demonstrate modern teaching procedures and aids.

F. Have a sound philosophy of education and be interested in the entire educational world.

G. Be able to inspire others to assume responsibility.

H. Be a good public relations agent.

I. Possess extensive knowledge and understanding of people.

J. Possess training and understanding of non-language fields in education such as tests and measurements, audio-visual aids, etc.).

K. Be able to help teachers improve their methods and techniques as well as aid them in evaluating their teaching competency.

- and -

L. Be a good listener, be fair, sincere, humble, sympathetic, and have respect for individuals.

Supervisors with the above qualifications are not easily found. However, I feel such a background is necessary, for a supervisor is judged by the service he renders and not by the position he holds. He cannot render good service with a weak background.

III. What is the role of a state foreign language supervisor?

Naturally, the role and amount of time devoted to any particular activity by a state supervisor will vary from state to state. This is due to the difference in structure and organization of each state department of education. The following, however, should give you an idea of his time distribution:

	ACTIVITIES	TIME DISTRIBUTION
A.	Working with teachers and administrators	40% of total
B.	Conducting and attending conferences and workshops	15%
C.	Administration	15%
D.	Research	10%
E.	Working with related agencies	10%
F.	Demonstration teaching	5%
G.	Other*	5%
	Total	100%

*Other activities include speaking at P.T.A.'s, publicity, evaluation, and clerical work.

Let us now take a more detailed look at the supervisor's role. He:

A. Assists local teachers and administrators with their instructional activities. This includes:

1. Evaluation of existing programs.
2. Recommendations for their strengthening and improvement.
3. Encouraging professional growth through in-service programs and other media.

4. Encouraging, and assisting in, the formulation of functional, realistic statements of philosophy, purposes, and objectives of foreign language education (e.g., curriculum guides).
5. Aid in the selection and procurement of instructional material and equipment based on local needs.
6. Aid in the preparation of proposals for financial (Title III) assistance for equipment and instructional material.

B. Coordinates the state-wide instructional effort into a well-balanced, dynamic program. This includes:

1. Promotion and organization of state-wide conferences; regional, county, and city workshops for the purpose of acquainting teachers with new materials, techniques, and aids at all levels of instruction.
2. Working closely with teacher-preparing institutions concerning pre-service and in-service programs.
3. Working with various state and regional foreign language associations.
4. Development of minimum standards for equipment and materials.
5. Development of state guidelines for the teaching of the various foreign languages (Refer III, A,4).
6. Encouraging teacher participation in professional associations and activities.
7. Encouragement and reward of leadership at the local level.

8. Using bulletins or newsletters to keep teachers informed of local, state, and national activities affecting foreign language education.
9. Serving as a clearing house for matters pertaining to the field of foreign languages (such as fellowships, institutes, and analysis and interpretation of research).
10. Informing school administrators, civic groups, and laymen of the role of foreign language education and the need for their understanding and support.

C. Serves in a liaison capacity with:

1. Related state department of education divisions (such as Audio-Visual, Teacher Certification, Curriculum, Library, Textbook, and others).
2. State organizations such as the state teachers association, state P.T.A., state guidance association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and various state associations composed of principals, supervisors and superintendents.
3. National agencies such as the Department of Foreign Languages of the National Education Association, the Modern Language Association, the U. S. Office of Education, and the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Languages.

The supervisor's road is not always a smooth one. He is often faced with lack of cooperation and understanding on the part of college professors,

elementary and secondary-school teachers, state department of education personnel, local administrators, and parents (who often say: "They didn't do it that way when I was in school!") All these obstacles, however, can be overcome if you do your share in promoting better foreign language education. The supervisor needs and wants your help. He can also help you; call on him.

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